REMARKS

Applicants request favorable reconsideration and allowance of this application in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Claims 9-14, 17-20, 24-27, 31, 32, 40-42, and 46 are presented for examination. Claims 9, 17, 18, 25, and 40 are in independent form.

Claims 18, 25, and 40 have been amended. Applicants submit that support for those amendments can be found in the original disclosure and, therefore, no new matter has been added.

Claims 9-14, 17-20, 24-27, and 31-48 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,909,602 (Nakai et al.). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection for the reasons discussed below.

As recited in independent Claim 9, the present invention is directed to an image processing apparatus with receiving means for receiving color image data from an image generating apparatus. In an image processing apparatus generally, it is desirable to prevent forgery by judging whether an image to be output corresponds to a specific image for which output should not be permitted. In the case of an image processing apparatus that receives color image data from an image generating apparatus, as recited in Claim 9, however, the image generating apparatus from which color image data is received may or may not have the forgery judging function. If the image generating apparatus has such a forgery judging function, then it is duplicative and wasteful to repeat the forgery judging function in the image processing apparatus that receives the color image data. On the other hand, if the image generating apparatus does not have the forgery judging function, it is

important for the image processing apparatus that receives the color image data to perform

the forgery judging function, so that outputting of prohibited images can be avoiced.

The present invention as recited in independent Claim 9 addresses this

situation and does so by including, *inter alia,* the features of (i) judging means for judging

whether a color image composed of color image data received by the receiving means is a

specific image and (ii) wherein the apparatus controls formation of a color image according

to a result of judgment in an image generating apparatus having the forgery judging

function, if the color image data is generated by an image generating apparatus having the

forgery judging function, and controls formation of the color image according to a result of

judgement by the judging means, if the color image data is generated by an image

generating apparatus not having the forgery judging function. Due to these features, an

image processing apparatus can reliably avoid outputting color image data for specific

images regardless of whether it receives the color image data from an image generating

apparatus having a forgery judging function or an image generating apparatus not having

the forgery judging function, yet at the same time the image processing apparatus can avoid

unnecessarily duplicating the forgery judging function.

Applicants submit that the cited art fails to disclose or suggest at least the

above-mentioned features. Nakai et al. discloses a system including a copy machine 91

and a copy machine 93. A copy machine 93 includes a reception unit for receiving color

image data and a judging unit that can judge whether the received color image data

represents a specific image. The copy machine 93 returns the result of judging to the copy

machine 91, but does not receive a judged result from the copy machine 91. Therefore, the

copy machine 93 does not control formation of a color image according to a result of

judgment in an image generating apparatus having a forgery judging function (as recited in Claim 9) because copy machine 91 does not even receive a judged result from copy machine 91. Further, copy machine 93 does not control formation of a color image according to a result of the judgement by its judging means (as recited in Claim 9), because copy machine 93 does not perform color image forming based on the judgment result of the judging unit.

Accordingly, Applicants submit that Independent Claim 9 is patentable over the cited art.

Independent Claim 17 is a method claim that recites features similar to those of Claim 9, and Claim 17 is believed patentable for reasons similar to Claim 9.

Regarding independent Claim 18, the present invention as recited in that claim is directed to an image processing system that includes, among others, at least the features of a first apparatus inputting an image signal and a second apparatus outputting an image using the image signal. The first apparatus includes first judging means that performs judgment of a first kind of specific image, and the second apparatus includes second judging means that performs judgment of a second kind of specific image different from the first kind of specific image. These features are supported, for example, at least in the fourth disclosed embodiment in the original specification. Due to these features, the input apparatus and the output apparatus perform judgment for different kinds of specific images, which enhances the ability to detect an improper specific image without duplicating all judgments.

Applicants submit that Nakai et al. fails to disclose or suggest at least the above-mentioned features of Claim 18. In Nakai et al., judgement is first performed by a

digital copy machine 92 and is then performed by the digital copy machine 93 for which the judgment level is higher than that of digital copy machine 92. However, that patent discloses that the machine for which the judgment level is higher has a large amount of data stored for copy-inhibited images (see col. 34, lines 32-38), i.e., judgment can be performed to detect many images. However, Applicants submit that nothing in <u>Nakai et al.</u> discloses or suggests that copy machine 92 judges specific images of a first kind and copy machine 93 judges specific images of a second kind different from the first kind.

Accordingly, Applicants submit that the present invention recited in independent Claim 18 is patentable over the cited art.

Independent Claim 25 is a method claim corresponding to Claim 18 and recites similar features. Claim 25 is believed patentable for at least the same reasons as Claim 18.

Regarding independent Claim 40, the present invention recited in that claim includes, among others, the features of (i) obtaining by a second apparatus information that denotes whether a first judgement has been performed, from the first apparatus and (ii) performing a second judgment for a specific image for which the first judgment has not be performed yet, if the first judgement has already been performed, and performing the second judgement for the specific images which can be used for judgment, if the first judgement has not been performed at all. These features are supported at least, for example, in the seventh embodiment of the original specification. With these features, judgment of specific images can be performed without duplicating judgment for specific images for which judgement has already been performed.

Applicants submit that <u>Nakai et al.</u> fails to disclose or suggest at least the above-mentioned features. In particular, that patent does not disclose or suggest obtaining

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by a second apparatus information that denotes whether a first judgment has been performed, from the first apparatus, and therefore it cannot perform a second judgment based on whether the first judgment has been performed for specific images.
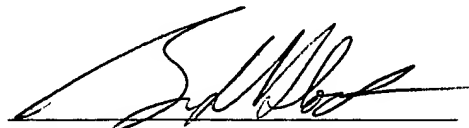
Accordingly, Applicants submit that independent Claim 40 is also patentable over the cited art.

The dependent claims are believed patentable for at least the same reasons as the independent claims from which they depend, as well as for the additional features they recite.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants submit that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration, withdrawal of the rejection set forth in the above-mentioned Office Action, and an early Notice of Allowance are requested.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

Attorney for Applicants
Brian L. Klock
Registration No. 36,570

FITZPATRICK, CELLA, HARPER & SCINTO
30 Rockefeller Plaza
New York, New York 10112-3801
Facsimile: (212) 218-2200
BLK/mls

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